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KAPOK # 532

VIA: Air Pouch
(SPECIFY AIR OR SEA POUCH)

DISPATCH NO. PGA-A-5037

SECRET
~~KAPOK~~ *my 28 JUL 1951*
CLASSIFICATION

(initials)

DATE 7 September 1951

TO : Chief, FDP

FROM *[initials]*

SUBJECT: GENERAL- Operational
SPECIFIC- THUNDERCLAP Airdrop

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3028
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

Refs: *[initials]* 6851, PGA-W-2714, PGA-A-4629

1. Attached are two reports as attachments "A" and "B". Attachment "A" is the ZACACTUS debriefing of the air crew following the ZACABIN air drop on 16-17 August 1951. The debriefing was classified TOP SECRET by ZACACTUS, but in accordance with PGA-W-2714, the classification was changed by us to SECRET/KAPOK. Attachment "B" is a report prepared by JASPER concerning the operational support and training for Operation THUNDERCLAP.

2. Each member of the THUNDERCLAP team received parachute training as outlined in PGA-A-4629(KAPOK 472).

3. In addition to parachute training, T/2 and 5 were trained in the proper use of the general purpose leg bag. Although this is the first time that we have used the general purpose leg bag, T/5 had used it previously during the CHARITY operations.

4. The general purpose leg bag is attached to the front of a body with three clasps and an extension line 35 feet in length. Immediately after the parachute opens, the clasps are released, permitting the leg bag to drop 35 feet below the body. One end of the extension line remains tied to the body and the other end remains tied to the leg bag.

5. The general purpose leg bag was used in this operation because it enables the W/T operator to parachute with his complete W/T set.

6. When the parachutist reaches the ground, he can transfer the contents of the leg bag to a large rucksack which is placed inside the leg bag. In the event that the transference operation is not feasible, both T/2 and 5 demonstrated at the safehouse that each, unaided, could strap the leg bag to his back and rise to his feet, leaving both hands free.

7. In para. 4 of the ZACACTUS debriefing(Attachment "A") it is mentioned that the "the No. 1 man's(T/5) leg bag and other jump equipment were so bulky and heavy that he required assistance to stand and move". The leg bag attached

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FORM NO. 51-28
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to T/5 weighed 60-75 pounds, and he was able to seat himself when he entered the plane. (The leg bag is attached to the body in the plane cabin). Also, the above report does not mention encountering any difficulty with T/2 whose leg bag also weighed 60-75 pounds.

8. It appears most unusual that T/5 demanded to know the jump signal. Not only is the jump signal SOP during parachute training, but it is also SOP for all parachute drops. T/5 had jumped before as a CHARITY member. In order to substantiate the fact that the jump signal had been included in the parachute training program, T/4, who was not sent with the team, was questioned in this connection. T/4's answer indicated that he thoroughly understood the proper jump procedure, including the jump signal.

9. In order for the plane to approach the Drop Zone on a north-south run, it had to make a sharp turn around Krepi i Truncit Mountain. T/5, 2 and 1 were standing in jump position during this sharp turn. It is possible that the bank of the plane caused T/5 to fall out since all his weight (attached leg bag) was in front of him.

10. It is obvious that the plane being loaded with many bundles made it difficult for the Jump Master to give all the necessary attention to the bodies. This, however, does not explain why the Jump Master removed the door prior to fastening the static lines, nor why he permitted the No. 3 man (T/1) to stand in the jump position before his static line was fastened. It is important to note that the No. 3 man's static line was not fastened 30 seconds before the Drop Zone.

11. The ZACACTUS debriefing (Attachment "A") clearly indicates that 1½ miles (30 seconds travel time) were covered between the time the No. 1 and No. 4 man dropped. Since the team members were scattered so far apart, it is most unlikely that they located each other. Although the team received training in assembly, it required their being within hearing distance of each other.

12. The proposed route to the rendezvous area crosses near the area where the No. 2 man (T/2) dropped, but not close enough to where the No. 1 man (T/5) dropped. Assuming that the No. 3 and 4 men (T/1 and 3) are together, it is possible they located the No. 2 man.

13. From the ZACACTUS debriefing, it appears that the Jump Master did not have the bodies under control prior to the jump and should have asked the pilot to make a new run. It is fortunate that the entire stick did not go out of the plane after the first man jumped, since the No. 3 man's parachute was not fastened.

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14. Due to the unfortunate circumstances of this drop, the Jump Master has been given a rigid SOP and the necessary authority to enforce it. The static lines of the parachutes are fastened before the door is opened. After the door is opened, a heavy strap is placed across the doorway to prevent anyone from going out before the signal. This procedure worked very efficiently for the THROWOFF mission(ATHE 6917), the report of which is also being pouched.

JPE/RPB/gam

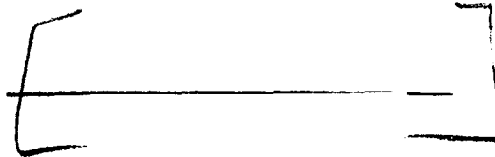
2 Atchmts.-"A" and "B"

Distribution:

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EX A-1

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ATTACHMENT A

6 September 1951

SUBJECT: ZACabin Air Drop of 16/17 August 1951

1. Except for close MG fire from two guns believed to be located some 200 yards from the summit of the 1430 meter peak at H-1027, the raid was unmolested. The flight was conducted in clear weather, brilliant moonlight, variable winds, and visibility as high as 50 miles. High, thin cirrus and thin stratus with bases between 15 and 20 thousand feet (that served only to filter, not obliterate, the moonlight) covered the LCBatland littoral but dissipated to high, thin, broken cirrus as the flight progressed inland. The target areas were CAVU. Surface winds were light and variable.
2. The flight departed LCDrink at 2115 hours local time and proceeded through the Gulf of Corinth, west of Corfu, to a position 40 degrees 30 minutes north 18 degrees 30 minutes east, arriving at that fix at 2337 hours. Altitude was 10,000 feet indicated. At 2355 hours, position was reached at 41 degrees ten minutes north 18 degrees 40 minutes east and the true heading was altered to 53 degrees.
3. The LCBatland coast was crossed over C-1277 at 0014 hours from a height of 10,000 feet. Here the course was swung to 74 degrees true and a descent started at 500 to 1,000 feet a minute. Lyceum, its aerodrome, and B-1667 were lighted.
4. Approximately five minutes before reaching Drin I, ZHI river on this 74 degree heading the aircraft commander called the Dispatcher on the intercom to direct him to remove the door. It had been agreed between the crew that exposing the bodies to an open jump-way any earlier than necessary only would serve to heighten whatever excitement was running. Always before this acted as cause to increase natural nervousness. Flying at 6,000 feet ASL the aircraft was over I-0941 at 0029 hours. The door had been removed and secured. In order to (a) jockey for a proper drop altitude, (b) further nail local checkpoints, and (c) provide the Dispatcher with adequate time to make final preparation for the jump, the aircraft turned upstream upon intersecting Drin I, Zhi river. During the turn northward the aircraft commander warned the Dispatcher by intercom to secure all bodies for the jump. At this time the Dispatcher and his assistant began to fasten the static lines, tighten the rear-end straps of the leg bag, and direct the bodies to their feet. The No. 1 man's leg bag and other jump equipment were so bulky and heavy that he required assistance to stand and move. Once ready and on his feet he stood midway

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before the open doorway. Bundles and hulking bodies crammed all the space in the cabin, making any movement a labor.

5. Meanwhile, the aircraft had progressed within several miles of ZR Shower which, despite a stringent blackout, was easily identified. At the same time the assistant dispatcher was struggling with a balky clamp on No. 3 man's static line. No. 2 had been prepared and was standing on the right of No. 1, toward the fore of the cabin, and next to No. 3. No. 4 man still was sitting in the rear of the cabin opposite No. 1. The Dispatcher had posted himself in the only available space remaining - in the center, beneath the dangling intercom phone and between bodies 1 and 4. Anxious for No. 3 to get his lines attached so as to be able to inform the cockpit that all was ready, he was set to crawl over the bundles and give a hand.
6. At this instant No. 1 jumped from the aircraft. The Dispatcher and all aboard were taken by complete surprise. No signal bell had sounded and no one, certainly not the Dispatcher, had slapped the man's shoulder, the prescribed signal to go. Since the stunt was totally unexpected and the entire crew was engrossed in the demands of a drop approach, no one could tell precisely over what position the man had bolted. In reconstruction it appeared to be between 1 and 1½ miles from the DZ on a north-south line some 500 meters east of the summit of Krepi Truncit Mountain. Following No. 1's unannounced departure, No. 2 moved toward the door, evidently set to follow his leader. The Dispatcher detained the heavily laden man. Then, realizing that Nos. 1 and 2, a W/T team carrying all the radio equipment, would be working together on the ground, the Dispatcher slapped 2's rump. He jumped, possibly 10 seconds after the leader. Witnessing this action, No. 3 assumed a creditable cue, and he also attempted to leave, his static line still unfastened. At this, the Dispatcher placed his arm across the doorway and waved off the eager leaper. During the melee No. 4 had not moved from his seat. It is worthy of note that 45 minutes or an hour before the scheduled drop, No. 1 demanded, in sign language and broken DT Ethyl, to know the jump signal. This, too, surprised the Dispatcher. He explained by pantomime and (DT Ethyl) that the backslap was the jump command. (The bell is the signal to the Dispatcher that jumps can safely begin.) It was No. 1, also, who acted the most excited during the entire flight. Among things, he refused to allow the Dispatcher to tape down his Schmeisser which was hanging free from his neck.
7. The Dispatcher immediately (seconds later) called the aircraft commander on the intercom and informed him of the premature jumps. He was told by the Commander that they were coming up on the DZ and to complete his final preparations. In seconds (see next line) the assistant dispatcher had readied No. 3 and the Dispatcher had prepared No. 4; done, it was reported

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to the Commander by intercom. About 15-17 seconds after the No. 2 man had departed (or some 5 seconds after the last intercom call) the jump bell first sounded. By then, 0035 hours, the remaining two men were ready and standing in the doorway. They jumped, perhaps 3 seconds apart, immediately on signal.

8. All this (Paras 5, 6, and 7) occurred between 30 and 35 seconds before the bell sounded indicating the arrival over the target. Actually, the unscripted performance was more orderly than a cold account makes it appear. As near as can be reconstructed, the W/T pair could have landed either on the side of Krepi I Truncit Mountain or on the valley floor some 2,000 feet below. From the standpoint of lights, the whole valley appeared desolate. No open parachutes were observed.
9. The aircraft then continued to effect a BGFiend resupply drop and exit from the coast was made at 0148 hours at indicated altitude of 6,000 feet. The aircraft landed at LCBrink at 0410 hours. The time of the ZACabin body drop was 0035 hours.
10. The MG fire was first reported by the assistant dispatcher about 4 minutes before Drin I, Zhi River, was intersected on the 74-degree heading. His view was from the astrodome; the sight of tracers and the flashes from two barrels were seen by the navigator and the dispatcher as well. This appeared to be the closest any hostile action had come to success in any BGFiend sortie. It would seem peculiar that shepherds might be armed with MG's; less odd that they should be guards posted at trail junctions that do exist in this very region.

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ATTACHMENT B

6 September 1951

SUBJECT: Operational Support and Training for Operation THUNDERCLAP

1. JASPER gave the THUNDERCLAP Group (originally five bodies, later reduced to four bodies) the following training:
 - a. Parachute
 - b. Map reading
 - c. Compass reading
 - d. Small arms -
 - (1) automatic sub-machine gun
 - (2) Colt automatic 38
 - (3) Walter P.38 (German)
 - e. Field problem - assembly after parachuting
2. The parachute training was carried out in the THUNDERCLAP safehouse. Improvised and expedient methods were used: mattresses instead of sandpits, chairs and tables for different jumping heights instead of mock airplane door. Group was taught proper positions and procedures for: (a) lining up for exit from plane, (b) hooking up and checking safety clasps to cable inside of plane; (c) exit from door, (d) proper descent position, (e) proper roll position when hitting ground, (f) proper steps by number in freeing themselves from parachute upon hitting ground (opening safety clasp), (g) harness training - after chute opens, proper method of reaching for shroud line while descending.
3. Stressed in training was proper exit out of door. The bodies, after lining up at the door were instructed only to depart out of door into space upon proper signal (such as tap on shoulder or buttocks) from Jump Master. Only front man is tapped, all others are to follow immediately unless the bell (signal for Jump Master) stops ringing. This was practiced and carried out satisfactorily.
4. The general purpose leg bag was introduced to the THUNDERCLAP Group. This was the first time that such a bag was used for operational purposes by us. The bag, after being packed with material, is strapped to the man's parachute as follows: 2 safety quick-releasing clasps are secured to the 2 D-rings; a leg belt with clasp goes through two loops (which are part of leg bag) around the man's lower buttocks, and is locked on the man's right lower thigh. An extension line (shock absorber) 35 feet long is tied

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securely to the man's parachute, just to rear of left D-ring and also to the two hooks on top of the leg bag. After exiting out of door, the body waits until chute has opened (3 seconds), then immediately unhooks in order: first, the leg strap clasp which frees the bag from the lower part of man's body; then, second, simultaneously release the 2 D-ring clasps that release the entire bag from the descending body to a distance 35 feet below. A rubber shock absorber in the middle of the 35 foot strap absorbs the shock. In order of descent, first the bag hits the ground followed by the body, and finally the parachute. This training (dry run) was carried out successfully and practiced by the THUNDERCLAP Group. The quick releasing clasps are of a type that are very easy to open. With only slight forward pressure the clasp will open quickly.

5. T/5 of the THUNDERCLAP Group has previously used the general purpose leg bag.

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dispatch to
field. Jmy*

6. The group was given four hours of map and compass reading. Locating North with and without a compass was stressed, also locating North by churches, trees (moss on one side), by stars (big dipper), watch (timepiece), by inspection (maps and objects), and by coordination of compass and map.

7. Small arms course consisted of field stripping automatic sub-machine gun, Colt 38 automatic, and P-38 Walter; three practice range sessions in Mount Penteli area; gun cleaning and care of weapons. Guns were shot at 250 yards distance for automatic sub-machine gun and 25 yards for pistol. Accuracy rating for group - good.

8. A field problem on assembly after parachuting was practiced at night. The group was taught to attract each other by special noises and finally to challenge each other upon reaching the central person (usually the middle man in a stick of five persons). This problem proved to be very successful.

9. Parachutes were all fitted and sized two days before target night.

10. Training was completed on 10 August 1951.

11. All operational equipment, including two complete radio sets, was packed into rucksacks and leg bags and readied for tying to bodies 12 August 1951. The leg bags carried radio equipment. Rucksacks weigh 35 pounds, leg bags weigh 60-75 pounds.

12. JASPER delivered bodies and equipment to field 12 August 1951, secured all equipment to bodies, and gave final parachute briefing.

13. JASPER accumulated the following supplies and issued to THUNDERCLAP Group (five bodies):

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Communications - 2 complete radio sets with spare part kit, generators, and generator chair

Apparel - 4 pairs army shoes, combat - sizes 7, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$, and 11
1 pair leggings
5 sweaters
5 jackets (parkas)

Sanitary - 5 Gillete safety razors
100 razor blades
5 boxes DDT
5 combs

Medical - 1 First Aid Kit
1 bottle Hulizone tablets
5 Dramamin tablets
5 L tablets

Food - cheese)
chocolate) sufficient amount for five days
bread)

Firearms - 4 Colt automatic 38 pistols
4 German sub-machine guns - Schmeizer
28 Schmeizer clips
10 hand grenades
3600 rounds ammunition 9 mm.
16 clip carriers
1 clip loader
2 gun cleaning kits
1 Greek rifle

Special Operational

- 5 parachutes
5 knapsacks
2 general purpose bags
4 flashlights with batteries
2 binoculars
5 compasses
4 wrist watches
2 flashlight bulbs
1 hone for sharpening
1 straight razor
1 scissors
1 special comb

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- 1 hairclipper
- 4 hunting knives
- 5 pocket knives
- 5 water canteens
- 3 fountain pens (ball point)
- 12 pencils, 3 packages paper
- 3 large paper clips
- 5 pairs ankle braces, elastic
- 10 ankle wraps, elastic
- 2 sewing kits
- 500 Greek cigarettes
- 5 cigarette lighters
- 15 cans of smoking tobacco
- 3 pipes

Exchange Commodities

- 200 razor blades
- 1 box needles

Special to-order Equipment

- 1 pup tent
- 1 water bag
- 4 holster belts, leather, 2" wide
- 4 slings for sub-machine gun, leather
- 5 grenade holders, leather
- 4 leather holders
- 4 money belts

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